

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE FINANCE REVENUE AND BONDING
COMMITTEE
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Testimony in Opposition to House Bill No.5423

AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF LARGE CAPITAL PROJECTS

Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz and distinguished members of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in opposition to House Bill No. 5423, An Act Concerning Oversight of Large Capital Projects.

This bill proposes adding an expensive, time-consuming and redundant layer of legislative oversight to any capital project costing \$50 million or more that is funded in whole or in part by general obligation bonds (GO). Capital projects of this magnitude that are undertaken by state agencies utilizing GO bonds are already subject to review and approval of the General Assembly through the budget process. For example, there is only one project in last year's bond bill to which this proposed oversight would apply: That project is for the Board of Regents for Higher Education to finance an expansion of Housatonic Community College. The project was requested by the board, recommended by the Governor, reviewed and approved by the bonding subcommittee and the full Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee, and ultimately approved by the entire General Assembly in the enacted bond bill. Additionally, only the design funds were authorized, giving the General Assembly another chance to pass judgment on going forward with the project when construction funds are requested in a future capital budget.

Another example of large GO bond funded projects that would be subject to this oversight includes the major renovation and expansion projects at the Vocational-Technical High Schools which are subject to review and approval by the Education Committee on the school construction priority list. Various projects for the State University System (CSU) under the CSUS 2020 program would also be subject to this process. These projects were reviewed and approved and listed in that legislation and CSU must obtain legislative approval to amend the project list.

As you can see, there is already substantial legislative oversight of these projects. I would like to again thank the committee for the opportunity to present this testimony. I respectfully request the Committee take no action on this bill and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.